



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Michael R. Bloomberg
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Commissioner

nyc.gov/health

*****PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE AND OFFICE STAFF *****

November 14, 2006

Dear Colleague:

In June 2006, the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended the routine use of human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine (Gardasil®) for females at 11-12 years of age. The vaccine may also be given to girls at age 9-10 years and as catch-up vaccination for females at 13-26 years. ACIP also voted to make this vaccine available through the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC). The federal contract for this vaccine was recently signed. You may immediately begin faxing orders to VFC, which will supply the HPV vaccine for VFC-eligible girls and adolescents who are 9 through 18 years of age. This vaccine is not currently licensed for males.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. There are approximately 6.2 million new infections each year, 74% of which occur in the 15-24 year age group. HPV infection is responsible for 70% of cervical cancers (types 16 and 18) and 90% of genital warts (types 6 and 11). On average in the US, there are 9,710 new cases and 3,700 deaths each year from cervical cancer.

Gardasil® is the first vaccine licensed to prevent genital warts, precancerous genital lesions, and cervical cancer, representing a major advance in the fight against cancer. It is a non-infectious quadravalent recombinant vaccine with greater than 95% efficacy against infection with HPV types 6, 11, 16, and 18 in HPV-naïve women.

- The vaccine is given in a three dose series at 0, 2, and 6 months.
- The highest levels of antibody are achieved in the youngest age groups, therefore vaccination starting as early as 9 years of age is encouraged.
- Contraindications to this vaccine are hypersensitivity to yeast or history of hypersensitivity to a prior dose.

Ideally, the vaccine should be administered before the onset of sexual activity (i.e., before exposure to HPV), but sexually active females should also be vaccinated because it is unlikely that an individual would be infected with all four HPV types, and therefore would still be afforded some protection. The vaccine does not provide any therapeutic efficacy for females with pre-existing infection. Pap testing or HPV screening are not indicated prior to immunization. Recommendations for Pap testing have not been changed.

Additional information about HPV vaccine can be found at www.cdc.gov/nip/vaccine/hpv/default.htm.

Orders for HPV vaccine must be faxed to the VFC at 212-447-8196. For VFC questions, please call 212-447-8175.

All doses of any vaccine administered to all children and adolescents <19 years of age in New York City must be reported to the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) within 14 days of administration. Immunizations administered to persons 19 years of age and older may be reported to the CIR with consent in the office medical record. If reporting to the CIR by electronic batch file transfer, add HPV vaccine (CIR code: 62; CPT: 90649) to the database and screens of your own systems. For questions about the CIR, please call 212-676-2323. For professional or technical questions, please call the Bureau of Immunization at 212-676-2259.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, M.D., M.Sc.
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization